



## PREVENTIVE HEALTH AND HEALTH SERVICES BLOCK GRANT

### WHAT IS THE PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUE?

The Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant (PHHSBG) is a critical public health resource used in states and communities to

- Respond rapidly to emerging health problems, including foodborne infections and waterborne diseases.
- Provide states with flexible funds to meet individual state and community needs.
- Fund critical prevention efforts in those states where categorical funding does not exist for health problems such as skin cancer, child safety seats, and untreated dental decay.
- Support the efforts and increase the effectiveness of categorically funded programs such as diabetes, cardiovascular health, and tuberculosis.
- Leverage small amounts of funds to make major impacts on health problems.

The flexibility of PHHSBG has become even more vital to sustaining our national public health system as states face the pressures of decreased resources for public health services.

### WHAT HAS CDC ACCOMPLISHED?

CDC funds 61 grantees (50 states, the District of Columbia, 2 American Indian Tribes, and 8 U.S. territories). About 43% of funds are distributed directly to communities. In 2003, 67% were used to fill-in gaps to support critical public health needs, 27% provided the only funding available to address important health problems, 4% were used to start up new projects, and 2% went toward rapid response to emerging public health problems.

#### *Example of Program in Action*

In West Virginia, where deployment of emergency vehicles and certified Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel is stretched thin, CDC provided 62% of EMS funds for the state's 282,019 children under 12 years of age. Ohio's chronic disease mortality rates are among the highest in the nation. In 2003, \$1.92 million in funds were used to implement 21 projects covering 42 counties and 7,356,215 residents to educate and motivate individuals to increase heart healthy behaviors. The California Department of health leveraged \$263,775 in funds to obtain \$15 million from the California Endowment. The program is expected to increase access to fluoridated water from the current 17% (6 million residents) to 66% (23 million residents) by 2006, a major step towards increasing dental health in California. In Arizona, \$80,000 in funds provided the sole source of funding in the state's highly successful Environmental Protection Agency's *SunWise* program. More than 400 schools enrolled in the program and 12,000 children participated in *SunWise* activities taught in English and Spanish. Rhode Island implemented an innovative program wherein prompt cards comparing fast foods for seven national chains were developed to fit snugly over automobile visors.

### WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS

State health departments and CDC are embarking on a 3-year plan to implement an application and reporting rating system. The system will improve the quality of application and report information; identify needs and opportunities for technical assistance to states; and increase workforce competency. Additionally, an electronic compliance review system that will retain important institutional knowledge is under development.

*For additional information on this or other CDC programs, visit [www.cdc.gov/program](http://www.cdc.gov/program)*

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